Catholic Womanhood and the Socialistic State

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IN every age the least champion of truth must have a working knowledge of the weapons suited to that age. And to-day, in our own land, where a materialistic mist is fast obliterating our national, God-fearing convictions, this in an especial manner is the privilege of the Catholic woman. It is not for nothing that the sacrifice and devotion of twenty centuries have proclaimed truth, "eternal, God-made," and have protected it for her in her faith. And if to-day she is to combat Socialism's conception of truth, "material, man-made"—if she is to see active service in Catholicism's valiant defence against which the Socialistic attack must in the end recoil—she

[1] CATHOLIC DEFINITIONS OF SOCIALISM.

"We call Socialism a system of political economy, not as if it did not also lead to many social and political changes, but because the gist of Socialism consists in the nationalization of property and in the public administration of all goods" (*Cathrein*).

"The principle of Socialism is that the means of production are morally the property not of individuals but of the State; that in the hands of individuals, however widely diffused, such property exploits the labor of others, and that such exploitation is wrong" *(Belloc)*.

SOCIALIST DEFINITIONS OF SOCIALISM.

"Socialism advocates the transfer of ownership in the social tools of production—the land, factories, machinery, railroads, mines, etc.—from the individual capitalist, to be operated for the benefit of all" *(Hillquit)*.

"Socialism may be completely understood only when viewed in its broader sense, as first, an economic belief; second, a plan or prophecy for a future commonwealth, and third, a working method for the allotment of this commonwealth.....(in the United States). It is itself not a science, but is a basis for an ultimate programme, a series of immediate demands, and a summons of the working class to either constructive or revolutionary action" *(Hughan)*.

must be able to parry question with question, answer with answer, thrust with thrust.

At the outset, it would appear that the followers of two such different standards need not clash. The world being wide, we might go our several ways. However, not one, but many causes, have contributed to press us close. Since Marx and Engel first issued their manifesto, far greater changes have been wrought in the economic world than the worker then faced. To-day, woman cannot be left out of the reckoning. Modern industrialism sees us all—the believer in the eternal verities, and the believer that the material world is the only truth—wound in its coils. And it is in the struggle to free ourselves of a common bondage that our crossing of swords has come. To-day, then, the American woman—whether she works or plays—thus finds herself confronted by two conceptions of modern society, the direct result of these two conceptions of truth.

Are we to apply the principles of Eternal Truth to the moral and economic abuses of our state—to realize a great social reform through the coöperation of conscience-aroused individuals? Or, is the new Socialist State to be formed in which the workers shall control government and the means of production after modern capitalistic society has been swept away by a great social revolution,[2] or by some principle of buying-out the capitalist?[3] Either of these two proposals has a direct bearing upon

[2] Marx's *Kladderadatsch*—still the hope of one wing of American Socialists.

"More likely, the process of transformation will be complicated and diversified, and will be marked by a series of economic and social reforms, and legislative measures tending to divest the ruling classes of their monopolies, privileges, and advantages, step by step, until they are practically shorn of their power to exploit their fellows; *i. e.*, until all the important means of production have passed into collective ownership, and all the principal industries are reorganized on the basis of Socialist coöperation" (Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*).

[3] "It is impossible by any jugglery, to 'buy-out' the universality of the means of production without confiscation" (Belloc, *The Servile State*).

the needs of all American women. Social reform[4] being a development along the lines of our country's institutions, is simpler for us to grasp than Socialism. Yet frequently, we find their terms used interchangeably, so it seems doubtful whether any large number of American women can differentiate them.

In any event, reforms so far-reaching as Socialism proposes—reforms so far removed from our national ideas of government, demand a definite attitude from those most affected, which would not after all be our working class, but our women. Yet a definite attitude toward any great public question is not characteristic of American women. And perhaps it is too much to expect, since we have so many inherited racial, political, and religious antipathies or prepossessions.

Yet this cannot be the case with the Catholic women of our country. Whatever our other prejudices may be, we have one common bond. We possess Eternal Truth. We believe in its dogmatic teaching. We have, in consequence, a definite attitude toward life and its concerns. For it is truth's beautiful characteristic that it does not have to change to meet economic changes. Each Catholic woman knows each life is great for its eternal aim and end, and that it is because of this eternal aim and end she was created to serve God. She knows that every human being has certain inalienable and inherent rights:[5] the right to live, the right to marry, the right to liberty, the right to serve God. She knows, too, it is out of these natural moral rights that our duties spring, and flow to and from society: our duties as employer and employed—our attitude toward our difficulties and adjustments which must follow where the teaching of Jesus Christ is rejected by a large number of either class. For while Socialism would not have gone so far among American

[4] J. A. Ryan, D.D., *A Programme of Social Reform by Legislation* and *Social Reform on Catholic Lines.* New York: The Paulist Press.

[5] Alexander P. Mooney, M.D., *Catholic Principles of Social Reform.* London: Catholic Truth Society.

women, had not our material necessities gone farther, yet it is a noteworthy fact that the larger acceptance of the doctrines of this purely material theory, and our own materialistic growth, are synchronous with the loss of the American woman's faith in the Divinity of our Lord.

There are many signs that she is exchanging "old lamps for new," and is being cheated by the magician. Gone is our old stern attitude toward church attendance, toward the pursuit of amusement, toward the Bible, toward divorce. For given a vagueness of religious belief and a consequent inability to define it, we are bound to have a vague moral bearing toward duties and responsibilities. And the meaning of life becomes blurred. We exaggerate the importance of all its material side. Many sincere women, formerly calling themselves Christians, are looking to Marx's material conception of history to replace their lost faith. And are hoping by bettering the material condition of their neighbor to nourish their souls.

"The Christian Socialists," says Miss Hughan in her *American Socialism of the Present Day,* "are naturally drawn to a larger extent from the congregations of the more liberal Protestant Churches, representing the educated native middle class, rather than from the working classes to whom religion and radicalism comes, as a rule, in forms opposed to one another."

It is scarcely necessary to remind Catholic women that our Lord did not repeal the Ten Commandments. He added to them—the love of our neighbor as ourselves. Yet that humanitarianism which Christianity first taught the world, and for which Socialism stands, (providing the neighbor be a worker) has been made the whole of Christ's message. The cry of "justice"—Socialism's chief catchword in this country—has served to coalesce the border Socialist and the border Christian into a sort of interlocking directorate. Christian ministers ordained to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ now preach the gospel of material needs, while the Socialist "intellectual,"

admiring our Lord as a "Reformer," couples His Name with that of Karl Marx, and claims for Marx theories[6] a spiritual significance.[7] For the Catholic woman, however, there can be neither catchword nor vagueness. The need for clarity is too great. We know that every day the natural rights of women workers are disregarded. We know that there are some six million women and children working in our land of plenty—many of them over hours—for the merest pittance, and miserably housed. And the times are ripe for the Socialist appeal.

Undeniably, the word justice calls all American women. We have an inherited passion for justice, coupled with a perfectly normal desire "to get on," as we say; while it is for these two reasons the foreign-born woman comes to cast her lot with us. Just now, too, American women are asking for many measures for their betterment both economically and politically. The industrial changes of the past half century have made woman's demands almost identical with man's. We are now told that woman's whole future depends upon her economic and political independence. Socialism aligns itself with every measure to assure them. And it would further appear that woman having won her economic battle single-handed, first against man's opposition and then against his reluctant permission, should be even more ready than man to intrust her interests to a beneficent state whose concern would be equal for every individual. Socialism, therefore, invites the coöperative and understanding sympathy of all women towards securing justice for all women—a result to be perfectly achieved in the Socialist State.

What, then, is to be the Catholic woman's attitude toward the justice of Socialism? Why should not we, of

[6] "The Socialism that inspires hopes and fears to-day is of the school of Marx. No one is seriously apprehensive of any other so-called Socialistic movement, and no one is seriously concerned to criticize or refute the doctrines set forth by any other school of Socialists" (Professor Veblen, *Quarterly Journal Economics*, vol. xxi., pp. 295-300).

[7] Spargo, *Spiritual Significance of Modern Socialism.*

all American women—since we number so many Catholic workers who need justice—accept these promises of the Socialist State? It cannot be that we have any less lively interest than the Socialist in a decent means of livelihood for the worker, her living wage or educational opportunities. It cannot be that we approve the oppressive conditions of American industrialism. It cannot be that we are ignorant of our civic duties, or that we are not bound in conscience to eradicate human misery in so far as we are able. Yet it is in this very oneness of our material needs and aspirations, that the Catholic woman finds herself cautioned against this apparently practical programme. It is here she is called to the defence of those principles of Eternal Truth which underlie her inherent rights: the right to live, the right to marry, the right to liberty, the right to fulfill her destiny by serving God. For unless the justice of Socialism, which underlies its economic principle of truth, consorts with the justice of Christianity, unless the Socialist State can protect these moral rights which are from God, we must reject its promises. "To the Catholic, the State is the preserver and defender of rights, to the Socialist, the State is the giver of rights."[8]

This difference in the idea of the powers of the State is so vital and so far-reaching, that we at once understand how it is a religion opposes a system of economics —a question which the Catholic is often asked. For while the justice of Socialism and the promises of the Socialist State are apparently concerned with that material benefit of the working woman's means of livelihood, living wage and educational opportunities which cannot be dissociated from one of her inherent rights—the right to live—yet Socialism denies the fundamental principle of the right to live—the right to hold private property—and the Socialist State would work injustice to every other class of woman.

[8] Rev. J. B. McLoughlin, O.S.B., *The Catholic Doctrine of Property*. London: Catholic Truth Society.

Socialism by presupposing that we are ethically all alike, or that we all want the same things, builds its arguments upon economics. Truth is to be found only in the world about us—in the material world. Since all humanity is but a product of its material and economic environment, all history is susceptible of material and economic interpretation.[9] No one person is greater than any other. The needs of all being only economic may, therefore, be supplied by an economic commonwealth, in which the collective will is law. But the only gauge for the justice or injustice of that law would not be whether it was moral or immoral—right or wrong, as we say—but whether or not it was economic.

Catholic women do not have to be students of political economy—the dullest and most untutored woman in the United States can be made to understand that a purely economic justice can neither give nor guard our moral rights. For even economic justice needs to walk hand in hand with the other cardinal virtues—with prudence, with temperance, with fortitude. It must also be tempered with charity. We have but to watch the grasp of all this as it operates to-day in the lives of our Catholic poor, who have not lost their faith. Has not the oppressed Catholic woman worker the same temptations to self-pity and retaliation as her Socialist co-worker?

Yet what has her attitude toward the capitalist in common with that "aroused class consciousness" which considers any measures of relief forced from capitalization "are but a preparation of the workers to seize the whole powers of government, in order that they may thereby lay hold of the whole system of industry, and thus come into their rightful inheritance."[10] Or which tells the laborer that the wage workers cannot be freed from

[9] "When you get the 'materialistic conception of history,' many things are made plain. The halos 'round the heads of the 'great men' will disappear, and you have reached a point where the mouthings of bourgeois historians can no longer fool you" (*Appeal to Reason*, March 16, 1907).

[10] Socialist Party Platform, 1904.

exploitation without conquering the political power, and substituting collective for private ownership of the land and means of production used for exploitation."[11]

And in spite of the fact that Mr. Spargo tells us that Socialism "is universally recognized as a mighty force making for universal peace,"[12] Miss Hughan says that without exception Socialist leaders wish in all propaganda to emphasize the class struggle.[13] "In connection with the economic interpretation of history, the doctrine of class struggle thus forms the foundation of the American Socialist movement. The acceptance of it is universal among party members, and the leaders of the organization while suggesting tact in the presentation of the doctrine, yet unite in advising emphasis upon it in all propaganda." Justice set to this music sounds unfamiliar to Catholic ears. We must bear in mind that human justice must always be doled out to suffering humanity by means of human agents. And "there is no ground for assuming," as Skelton dryly observes, "that a regeneration of human nature will follow the mere substitution of the State as owner."[14]

The easy-going Catholic woman who to-day neglects to watch the trend of our own country of the greatest popular movement in modern history, who wonders why the Church, the great guardian of Incarnate Truth who has herself governed, and who has managed to live under every form of government, should look with particular disfavor upon the promises of the Socialist State, has not yet understood what the diffusion of Socialist ideas has meant for the cause of truth in other lands. If out of terrible material needs, the proscription of religious teaching, and an increasing material outlook, defections from Christianity have become an open hostility through the spread of Socialist propaganda, why should we expect

[11] *Ibid.*, 1908.

[12] Spargo, *Socialism and Motherhood.*

[13] Hughan, *American Socialism of the Present Day.*

[14] O. D. Skelton, *Socialism, a Critical Analysis.*

anything more hopeful from the growth of materialism here?

Obviously there is much coquetting between Socialism and some of the Christian sects. We have but to watch the many quasi-religious movements which Socialists conduct in our large cities like New York, to be assured of their ultimate coöperation as to politics. The *Christian Socialist* commented upon this fact as long ago as 1907. "A large section of American Socialists comprising chiefly the educated among the native elements, are coming into more and more friendly terms with the more liberal Churches, while the Christian Socialists, until recently unconnected with the political movement are now committed to the Socialist Party without reserve." Yet the Catholic is not the only one to mark the incongruity. "The fundamental philosophy underlying all forms of Socialism," says Price Collier in his *England and the English,* "is the worship of man. The pandering to this new doctrine in the name of Christian Socialism is simply loose-minded. The pith of Christianity and the pith of Socialism are as the poles apart." It is plain to see that while in other lands the Socialist has also been crying "justice," he has strayed again and again past our pickets. And the thoughtful Catholic women of our country will, therefore, see the need of sentry duty here.

Our Socialist "intellectuals" disclaim any responsibility for religious defections among the working classes. The Socialists are not opposed to Christianity, according to Mr. Spargo, but are only against the Church as a political organization. In his *Applied Socialism,* this popular American Socialist says, "There is no apparent reason why the belief in the collective ownership of the principle means of production should be incompatible with an equally strong belief in Christianity, or for that matter Buddhism or Confucianism." But this statement by the very breadth of its inclusion, rather increases than diminishes our fears, since we realize that the justice of Socialism being non-Christian, the promises of the So-

cialist State would not protect the great Christian principle of our right to live, because it rejects our right to hold private property—in other words the right of each one of us to do what we will with what we earn and own.

Now we have another inherent right—the right to marry—a right which strengthens our right to hold private property, and which is the very core of human society. For woman may or may not be politically or economically independent, but always she is race bearer. Her function of motherhood sequesters her under any form of government from autocracy to democracy. And to the Socialist State, the continuation of society through reproduction would be of equal import. But it would be of particular moment to woman, because this hitherto intimate prerogative—whether or not she considers it sacred—must also be made to conform to the collective will. It is impossible for us to approach the attitude of Socialism toward marriage and the relation of the sexes, without seeing to what an *impasse* all women would be brought. And this would be true especially of the Catholic woman, because logically Christian marriage must disappear in the Socialist State.

"The family while probably monogamous would not be compelled to assume this form [Miss Hughan[15] gleans from La Monte].....As we have it at present, according to the Socialists, the family rests upon a foundation of property rights,[16] veiled under some of the outworn forms of the patriarchate. With the minimizing of inherited estates, and the economic independence of women, with full civil and political rights accorded to the latter, and the eventual responsibility of society for the maintenance of children, both the theory of the patriarchal and the actuality of the property family would disappear. Woman would be compelled neither to marry for a home,

[15] *American Socialism of the Present Day.*

[16] The right to marry according to Catholic doctrine merely strengthens property rights.

nor to remain in subjection to distasteful marriage; and though few Americans look for the revolution foretold in Bebel's[17] *Woman Under Socialism,* yet a decided change in the position of the sex would under these circumstances be inevitable."

Just what this change will be, Catholic writers have been quick to see. And the doctrine of free love has been taught *ad nauseam* by Socialists from Bebel to Carpenter. Mr. Carpenter urges as his dictum that only after trial marriage can the proper affinity be found. Ellen Key, with her keen psychologic insight, has taught a larger understanding of motherhood, but chiefly that motherhood interferes with woman's career. It speaks much for the advance of American women toward a materialistic paganism, that all these books are on the shelves of our free libraries for the edification of American youth of both sexes. Yet Socialists to-day are denying any such outcome from the application of their principles. Either they are unable to see or unwilling to admit the danger of a monster commonwealth's collective will. They take it for granted that what is purely economic will be pure morality, that the will of the majority is always economic or always right. Many Socialists resent the charge of free love, because it is not their personal point of view, and on the ground, also, that the party as a whole has never been committed to free love. "There is no Socialist theory of marriage," says Mr. Spargo, in his latest book, *Socialism and Motherhood.*[18] "But inevitably," a non-Catholic writer reminds us, "the family would be crushed between individual selfishness and State interference; the care of children would more and more be made a State affair, family life would be emptied of its responsibilities as well as its privileges, of its burdens as well as of its joys, and marriage with this source of permanence re-

[17] "Catholic women should read Bebel's *Libel on Women*" (Rev. W. McMahon, S.J. London: Catholic Truth Society).

[18] O. D. Skelton, *Socialism, a Critical Analysis.*

moved, would become a temporary and arbitrary relation."

In *Socialism and Motherhood* a sentimental appeal is made to the American mother, who, from such false ideas of the teaching of Socialism, has been deterred from becoming a "comrade." Mr. Spargo propounds query after query intending to bring the attacks of opponents to naught. He even makes a few careless references to angels (!), and claims Socialism has been first to stand for every reform concerning the child, notably the milk question, although it is bacteriology, not Socialism, which has taught us all to safeguard our milk supply—"run for profit." "Suppose," he questions, "we applied the principle of collective ownership to telephones and telegraphs, to the supply of electric light and power, to the express service, to the water supply and the ice supply, is there any good reason for believing that the result would be free love and the destruction of private family life? Has that been the result where these things have been tried?"

In these disclaimers, Mr. Spargo's arrow shoots outside the mark. As a matter of fact we know collective ownership has not been tried out on a large scale anywhere in the world. It is municipal or government ownership to which Mr. Spargo rather disingenuously refers, so he will be no more convincing to our Catholic women than when he claims Socialism is not "incompatible" with Christianity. But when he comes to the actual discussion of Bebel's prophecies for woman's freedom in the Socialist State, Mr. Spargo says it is "impossible to read his work *Woman and Socialism* without reaching the conclusion that the ideal it preaches is free love. This is not the same as sexual promiscuity," Mr. Spargo further reassures timid American mothers, "nor is it incompatible with strict monogamy. What is meant is that the force of love alone ought to bind man and wife together without any external compulsion either of government, economic dependence, or social customs; that every marriage which

depends upon any or all of these external compulsions which love alone is not strong enough to perpetuate, ought to be dissolved in the interests of morality and happiness." What Mr. Spargo and all other Socialists forget is this: that it was not "the external compunction of government, or economic dependence, or social customs," which has forced the monogamic marriage as we know it to-day upon our civilization. It was Catholicism. By applying the principles of truth taught by Jesus, her Divine Founder, she compelled a pagan world to submit to its holy yoke. There is no mention of marriage in the early Fathers, or in Papal decrees, which does not clearly testify to its sacramental character as does the *Ne Temere* of only the other day.

Now there is no logical reason why the Socialist, or any other disbeliever in Christianity, should regard marriage as the sacred bond to which Jesus Christ raised it. But why, in heaven's name, prate of morality? We are considering a doctrine of political economy which leaves out morals. There is but one reason why the Socialist State would aspire to monogamy. And it is the same which forces the poorer Turk to be monogamic. Any other form of marriage would be uneconomic!

In *Socialism and the Great State,* G. R. Stirling-Taylor, in discussing the question of payment for mothers, contributes this: "It is not good that an intelligent woman should give up her whole time to the care of a single house, or of two or three children, who would be far better in the more varied society of a larger group, which could be more economically and efficiently tended by a professional nurse who chose (!) that work by preference. All these developments eventually may lead to the disappearance of the family as a social unit. There will probably be no place in the larger thinking Great State for the narrow autocracy of the father, controlling the individual rights of either the mother or the child. Such a unit will only hamper the individual, without assisting in the wider work of the State."

Such appeals to the "class consciousness" of wife and mother can have but one aim and end—not alone woman's economic and political independence of which women stand in need as well as men, but as with the worker—discontent and revolt. They are "useful in propaganda." They accustom women to the idea that Christian marriage is not an essential to the well-being of society and State. And our all too ready divorce mills in this country have prepared a fertile soil for their growth.

Still another method is in belittling the ordinary household tasks and, primarily, the intelligence of the mothers of the past.

"It is not, I think, [says Cicely Hamilton, in another chapter of the same book] generally recognized how largely—one may hope entirely—the undoubtedly low level of intelligence in woman as compared with man, is the direct result and product of dire economic necessity, the need for bread or the need for success in life. It has paid woman in the past—in some walks of life, notably marriage, it still pays them—to be stupid; intelligence in woman has been an obstacle to, not a qualification for motherhood. The consciousness of superiority is a pleasant thing; and it is a sober fact that for countless generations the human male has taken a real and active pleasure in despising the mental attainments of the human female, has insisted with emphasis that the wife of his bosom, the mother of his children, should be a creature he could look down upon as well as love. Standing in the position of capitalist—of employer in a compulsory trade—the average husband was able to dictate terms, to bargain for and obtain in his helpmeet the low level of intellectuality which he considered necessary to his comfort and self-esteem, with the bitter result for the human race that the mothers thereof have been, to a great extent, selected for their lack of wisdom, and encouraged to be greater fools than nature intended to make them."

All this would be profitless reprinting were it not for its evident appeal to the unthinking and creedless Ameri-

can woman, in particular, the woman with a grievance—real or fancied. Such women know nothing and care less for the deep industrial problems for which sincere men and women of every shade of opinion are to-day seeking a solution.[19] Our Catholic women should realize also which way many unmoored Christians are heading. These selections are of our own time, and "except in the manner of stating it,"[20] quite as Bebelian as Bebel. For the ideal which Socialist books place before all women is that of the freedom and independence of the pagan women of the Greek States. Yet both Athens and Sparta were small independent States. And the high degree of their civilization was made possible by a very large class of State serfs, an item of some economic importance singularly overlooked by the majority of Socialist writers. In Athens only daughters of citizens could be wives and mothers of citizens. But these women, while citizens, stayed at home. They took no part in the conduct of the State. It "paid" the women of the *hetœræ* to be brilliant and beautiful, just as it pays other courtesans to-day. It paid Aspasia. It paid Phyrne. But to their charms alone these women owed their political influence. And if it is to the *hetœræ* the Socialists wish our women to aspire, we must recollect that the Athenians never permitted these women, who were mostly foreign-born, to have political rights.

We must not interpret any glimpses of harmonious Socialist family life of to-day as true working formulæ for harmonious family life in the Socialist State. Since, according to Socialist doctrine, all Christian marriage has an economic basis—"a foundation of property rights;" since in the Socialist State the relation of the sexes would

[19] American Catholic women should read *Socialism; Promise or Menace?* by Hillquit-Ryan.

[20] Mr. Spargo, in the *Substance of Socialism,* thus takes exception in his preface to a criticism of a writer in the Boston *Transcript:* "I desire only to make plain the fact that except in the manner of stating it, there is not the slightest difference between my general position and that taken by Marx, Engels, Leibnecht, Kautsky, and others whose orthodoxy is unquestioned."

rest upon another economic basis—the fundamental need for sound citizens—how would woman acquire sex freedom by exchanging one economic relation where she is consulted, for another where she would not be? For even woman's place in the councils of the Socialist State would not leave her the unfettered things of to-day's roseate forecast. Neither her political nor her economic independence would safeguard her sexual independence. The Socialist State would determine the position of its citizens according to its economic needs. Woman's position would be decided by her qualifications for motherhood. Collective economics would brook no revolt against scientific eugenic selection. Human wastage must disappear. A super race is essential. The regulation of the birth-rate would be as stern a solicitude as a sound physical inheritance. The courtesan would not disappear. If it is to pagan Greece we must go, let us hark back to Plato's Republic and the State control of motherhood. It is from what we know of past history, from what we know of human nature, that we can draw our deductions, our prophecies. To the creedless 'Intellectual' to-day, it may seem a simple matter to cut out Catholicism, with its safeguards for woman, the home, the child, the derelict, the sick and infirm and aged. If the social sickness of our time is caused, as Leo XIII. was the first to point out, by too little religion in our political economy, what is to become of woman in a society where there is none?

To the Catholic woman, it is obvious, then, that neither the justice of Socialism nor the promises of the Socialist State, would protect woman's inherent right to marry, any more than it would secure her right to live. Both of these inherent rights are sanctified by the blessing of the Church, because we are created for a definite purpose. But what of those other rights—the right to liberty and the right to serve God—which of their very terms bespeak that purpose as high and all important? Rights for which Catholics have surrendered their other

inherent rights—when a State refused protection. Even if we consider only the American woman's right to liberty as the Socialist would—applicable wholly to her material, not her spiritual needs—we find difficulty to guarantee our liberty under Marxian rule.

Unquestionably, the power of choice is woman's dearest possession. And notwithstanding certain disabilities which are in many of our States, where not amended, in line to be amended, the American woman is probably more advantageously placed to exercise her power of choice, than any other woman in the world. Hard as the economic lot of the American woman worker often is, she is not prevented by any State law from exercising it—from choosing her work, or from going from one place to another where State laws better favor her particular case. And in all intellectual work, while theoretically there is much complaint of injustice to women, yet practically to-day American women occupy a respected place in the professions, arts, and sciences, and are gradually coming into political preferment.

The question of choice of vocation for women has become a thrifty commonplace amongst us. We know there is not sufficient work in the home for all the women of the household who want or who need to work. And we know all women do not want to marry even if there were a sufficient number of men. Under our laws, then, the American woman chooses her vocation, often apparently without due thought to her limitations, and if her career is not interrupted by marriage and family cares, the surprise she has given our times is her large degree of economic success.

Just how far the Socialist State would permit woman to exercise her choice of vocation is extremely problematic. Surprises in success would not be economic. And while vocational training and the parcelling out of work according to the State's need for such work would unquestionably help out those ever-present problems of to-day—the overcrowding of our cities, and the over-

crowding of professions in those cities—yet there is no apparent reason for the assumption that woman would secure the work she would like, nor the place in which she would like to live. Those problems of incentive, assignment, and remuneration which perplex Socialist writers to-day are perhaps less satisfactorily solved for woman than for man.

Bebel held out a fatuous programme in *Die Frau,* which has since been faithfully absorbed and exuded by the unthinking as true. "Socialism," he declared, "is science applied with full consciousness and clear knowledge to every function of human activity," and proceeded to offer unscientific and uneconomic prospects to allure talented women.[21] An age of arts and sciences such as the world has never seen before; and the artistic and scientific productions will be in proportion to the general progress. There will be "scholars and artists without numbers." Yet the practical mind fails to see how scholars and artists would have time to pursue their several arts—time to acquire the technique which must underlie their expression, in a state of society where it was the collective will that all take part in the social production.

The later Socialist writers recognize the folly of such unbridled appeals. They attract only the gullible, and provoke the derision of the thoughtful instead of winning their allegiance. And while that equal opportunity for every child which Mr. Spargo stresses, might find an occasional overlooked genius, that versatile talent which to a remarkable degree our women possess, because it has been wrung from their own initiative to grasp opportunities, would be necessarily levelled by Socialist educational processes.

On what premise the Socialist builds that oft-asserted fact that the Socialist State would be a patron of art or letters, has never been made quite clear. The logical development of art in an economic state would be rather

[21] Cathrein, *Socialism.*

on the line of the ultilitarian. Mere beauty being neither economic nor utilitarian would be last fostered. Art, as we conceive it, would be no more necessary than religion. For every people which has had a highly developed art, has had a highly developed religion, and an idealism wholly wanting in a state of pure economics. Yet we must not think of the Socialist State as ideal in our sense of the word, Miss Hughan reminds us, but as an evolutionary product of economic forces which the capitalist state is even now making. It would appear, then, from any deduction we can make from Socialist doctrine past or present, that the Socialist State would cut out woman's work for her, as much as is any piece work in a capitalist factory to-day.

But State control by collective will assumes far sterner proportions for the Catholic woman than for any other American woman. Not alone in the severing of the marriage tie would an anti-religious collective will work havoc for us, but in the choice of religious vocation which calls so many Catholic girls to consecrate their talents and their natural rights to the service of God. And this would be particularly true of our contemplative orders.

It is not easy to forecast any outlook for the nun in the Socialist State. Since all private property is to be done away, and all children are to be State wards, " playfully introduced "—as Bebel has it—to a compulsory economic education, there would be an immediate annulment of the nun's prominent work—religious education. Such institutions as were necessary would also be owned and operated by the Socialist State, although State assignment might give to her all those unlovely tasks which so complicate the perfect building of the new social structure. But the lesson of liberty in France is too fresh in the minds of our American Catholic women for us to fancy any possibility in an economic commonwealth, which would not mean an immediate dispersal of all religious communities. So the liberty of the Catholic woman—her power of choice—whether it be for her

material necessities, her right to marry, or her spiritual needs or vocation, would neither be guaranteed nor secured by the Socialist State.

We have but to dip a little further into Marx's theory of the materialistic conception of history, to understand why it interferes with our power of choice, which, after all, is but a part of God's greatest yet most perilous gift to us—free will.[22] Catholic women will be quick to appreciate that the great Socialist dogma ignores free will; ignores the great heroes or heroines of history or religion; neglects every spiritual force; and suppresses any fact which goes to prove that each of us has an integral value independent of our collective value. To the Catholic this is complete annihilation of Christian faith and teaching. That great Eternal Truth that God speaks to each human soul, according to the needs of that soul, and often through it to the needs of the hour, has never been more inspiring than when woman has been selected for some great economic or political crisis. Does the economic interpretation of history wholly explain for us that coming of a Domremy peasant girl to crown a king at Rheims, or a Sienese wool-dyer's daughter to reinstate the Popes in Rome?

"Religion is a private matter," was once an authoritative pronouncement of Karl Marx when pressed for an answer. And to this modern Socialism refers all inquirers. The more intellectual studies of modern economic problems, while frankly anticipating many changes, pass by, with a few encouraging platitudes, the vital questions of religion and family life, presumably as not in line with the discussion. But Marx's words, savoring similarly of Bebel's on the sex relation, cannot be satisfying to Catholicism. For us, religion can never be wholly a private matter. It has its interior demands, but it has, also, its exterior ones. It requires the priest, the altar stone, the sacrifice. The Catholic differs in this respect from other Christians who still acknowledge our

[22] Cathrein, *Socialism.*

Lord's Divinity. A belief like the doctrine of justification by faith, which requires an interior conformity, does not of necessity require an external expression. A staunch Presbyterian need not enter his church for months if the sermons be not to his liking, and yet there would no suspicion attach itself to his loyalty to this doctrine.

But "believe, and thou shalt be saved," was not our Lord's sole command. He was quite as explicit when He said He would found a Church which is to last to the world's end. He made it no less certain that He was giving supernatural powers to a particular set of men who could transmit these powers. He even showed these men what they were to do: "This is My Body," "This is My Blood," "Do this in commemoration of Me." Our exterior worship, then, yesterday, to-day and forever, centres about the Mass, whether it be performed in the small upper room, in the catacombs, in the jails of Elizabeth's England, in the caves of priest-hunting Ireland, in a chapel car out west, or at the High Altar of St. Peter's at Rome. Nor must we fancy that Socialism minimizes the strength of our organization, and the great fact, which attracts all other disbelievers—that the Catholic Church is on the side of law and order in whatever government she is found. Her solidarity in this regard is the despair of the revolutionary element in the Socialist ranks.

"The Church is one of the pillars of Capitalism," complained an editor of London *Justice,* Harry Quelch, "and the true function of the clergy is to chloroform the workers, to make docile wage slaves of them, patient and contented with their lot in this world, while expecting glorious reward in the next." As long as the Church holds the minds of workers in its grip, there will be little hope of freeing their bodies from capital supremacy."

In this country, Victor Berger, former U. S. Congressman from Wisconsin, echoes this: "Now the church is with the capitalist class without doubt, es-

pecially the Church *per se,* the Roman Catholic Church. That Church has always sided with the class in power .....The Church was on the side of feudalism while feudalism was on top, and the Church now sides with capitalism while capitalism is on top."

Miss Hughan is moderate always, but leaves us in no doubt that in its external form "religion is allowed no exemption from criticism. The State Churches of Europe, in fact, being openly allied with the bourgeois governments, are to be counted among the enemies of the proletariat."

Over against these citations we must place one from a Catholic author. "A society in which the Church shall conquer," says Mr. Belloc, "will be a society in which a proletariat shall be as unthinkable as it was in the Middle Ages."

Past history supports this apparently large claim. The one society in our civilization in which the working class and the master class have lived in entire harmony—and in which they formed associations for their common benefit—was at a time when Catholicism had won practically the whole of Europe to the everyday use of those principles of Eternal Truth which Jesus Christ left in her keeping: "You may be great, but you must be humble. You may be rich, but you must prefer poverty. You may love those who love you, but you must love those who hate you. You may forgive those who forgive you, but you must forgive those who injure you."

Divinity alone could have inspired such a code. Divinity alone has inspired men and women—is inspiring them today—to the practice of that code. Even Socialism realizes that the only men and women of the capitalist class who surrender their all for God and their neighbor, are our Catholic Religious. But what outlook is there for the infusion of such principles into Socialism or the promises of the Socialist State? Where Catholicism directs attention to the history of the Middle Ages to prove the efficacy of injecting religious principles into economics,

Socialism, by ignoring all such influences, interprets the more harmonious relationship between widely different classes as due to better economic conditions!

Nor is the vague hope that the Christian Socialists of our country—by their auspicious alliance of nomenclature—are to bring the Divine teachings of Christ into Socialism, destined to fruition. Logically, our Christian Socialists can communicate with either Catholic or Socialist only in the sign language of tolerance. For they deny the Divinity of Christ, which is anti-Christian, yet cling to Him as a great Man, which is anti-Socialist.

Obviously, the responsibility is wholly ours. In other words, we believe too much. We assert too much. And it is to this call the great Encyclicals of the last two Pontiffs are directed. Deep studies of economic problems as they are, the primary force of their message has been to bring clearly before an increasingly materialistic society—Catholic and non-Catholic—the perennial efficacy of the teachings of Jesus Christ, and to show all of us how far we have drifted from them. For the Church is chiefly interested not in the capitalist class, not in the middle class, not in the working class, but in each one of us who turns to her for spiritual guidance and nourishment. Each safeguard she sets about her little ones, each great soul tried and tempted in a difficult age to whom she points for our edification, is to show us of today that His teaching is neither impossible nor impractical. As the Guardian of Eternal Truth, her interest in the economic theories of Socialism is in the immorality of its inherent principles, and their bearing upon the individual souls of her children.

Simply put, we have seen that a collective economic will cannot protect our moral rights, since it is anti-Christian. Yet we must not fancy we have grasped the entire economic argument of Socialism. It is a socialistic age, and for the majority of our Catholic women life is a busy thing. Unquestionably a large number of us are deterred from any study of Socialism because the whole

emphasis of the argument is on its economic side—a side to which many women are wholly indifferent. But so long as the brilliant leaders of the Socialist party in this country can polish each facet of our economic problems, so long as the revolutionary element can keep our glaring social inequalities before the eyes of the workers, just so long will Socialism appeal to the discontent of a large class whose dry spiritual life is antagonistic to faith, or whose miserable lot is primarily responsible for their loss of it.

Miss Hughan thinks that a certain measure of responsibility as to the future of Socialism rests with "the cultural institutions of Church, press, and university.[23] Hostility on the part of these forces tends in general to weaken the influence of the "'Intellectuals' and the Christian Socialists, to harden the party organization on the lines of the class struggle, and to render the revolutionist the dominant Socialist type. If the movement is ignored by the higher intellectual forces, on the other hand, there is danger that Socialism, encountering in controversy only the ignorant and unscientific, may rest satisfied with the unrevised economics of the last century, and win the support of the people by superficial propaganda and specious promises of a millennium."

The importance, then, of a clear estimate of the moral issue involved in Socialism cannot be gainsaid. It is the farsight lens through which our Catholic women will come to see the economic argument in its true perspective. For while accentuating the paramount importance of guarding the individual's moral rights—which Socialism utterly ignores—we must not obscure the importance of that individual's environment. It is almost an axiom among Catholic sociologists that preventable human misery means the loss of a soul. With the highest in-

[23] "The Intercollegiate Socialist Society is a society for the promotion of an intelligent study of Socialism.....At the end of 1911 the Society had study chapters in thirty-eight American Colleges" (*Elements of Socialism,* by Spargo and Arner).

tention, neither the individual nor religion can accomplish every necessary reform in our country, because to-day legislation must do so much.[24]

We must be able to distinguish, however, between a government like ours in which the individual's inherent rights or efforts toward reforms—so long as he is law-abiding—are protected and unhampered, and would be even if government ownership prevailed, and a collective government like that promised in the Socialist State, where, as we have seen, the individual's rights or his actions would of necessity be hampered and made subservient.

In each of our States, also, we have the machinery for righting local abuses, if it be set in motion by our awakened consciences. There are, for example, no laws prohibiting associations of workers and employers for the common good of both. Such reforms await the individual action of employers and workers; while in a number of our States, each Catholic woman being politically independent, can voice her sentiments toward all reform measures for the benefit of the woman worker. Our Catholic women need to watch our current events. For dangers—no longer shadowy—lurk behind many of our political, social, and economic questions. No mere pietistic complacence will serve us to-day, if we aspire to the practical defence of Eternal Truth.

But if our Catholic women would strike sparks from the blades of their Socialist friends or coworkers, they must go to school again to their Faith. No Catholic pen has been too learned to adapt the general laws laid down in the Encyclicals to the particulars of locality. Our doctrinal and economic pamphlets, logically and clearly stated in simple language and built upon the writings of the Fathers, refute the misleading attacks of our opponents who are unused, as are our Catholic scholars, to culling information at first hand. Our Catholic Truth

[24] Dr. Ryan makes this very clear in his *Social Reform on Catholic Lines*. New York: The Paulist Press.

Societies are, in this way, both meeting the effective Socialist propaganda,[25] and are following Catholic Social Action in other lands.

American Catholics are wont to complain that the size of our country and our diffusion throughout the body politic, is inimical to the growth of combined Catholic Social Action.[26] But our very diffusion should rather bring home to each one of us our personal responsibility toward our riches. Possession means peace; defence, safety. But there is something higher than the ability to select our weapons for conflict. It is to apply the principles of Eternal Truth to our everyday lives. Through us its light must disperse the miasma of materialism, which threatens so much that is finest in us as a nation. And the ultimate spiritual disarmament of friends or foes will come only through this supreme power.

How else do our valiant women of the Middle Ages speak to us? Why is it that the great Encyclicals sound to us so strangely familiar, loving, admonishing and firm, as we read or study them to-day? Echoes they are, enlarged to our larger necessities, of that long ago letter of Peter's beseeching his "dearly beloved" to submit the force of Christlike example to the Gentiles, "that by doing well you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

Unconscious allies we have outside the fold, questioning, watching, waiting. It is a happy augury of our time that many of them are returning to learn their al-

[25] "The party (Socialist) carries on an almost incredible amount of educational work by means of traveling lectures, and the distribution of millions of pamphlets and books each year. Study courses are furnished to the local organizations, and in this way thousands of members are induced to make a systematic study of Socialistic theory" (*Elements of Socialism,* by Spargo and Arner).

[26] American Catholic women would find inspiration in the Social Study Courses arranged for this country and England, in the *Catholic Social Year Book,* published for the Catholic Social Guild of England, and in the publications of the Catholic Truth Society on Catholic Social Action in France, in Germany, etc.

phabet at the Mother's knee. They come largely through the power of Catholic example. But they do not come collectively. They come one by one. Is it not well for each Catholic woman to ask herself why out of millions of her countrywomen her possession of Eternal Truth should give her this opportunity? Our country sets no limit upon what we may do for our neighbor. Our faith enjoins it. And we are not to be judged collectively, but one by one.

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